



**Don't miss
any of
my other
fabumouse
adventures!**



**#1 Lost Treasure
of the Emerald Eye**



**#2 The Curse
of the Cheese
Pyramid**



**#3 Cat and
Mouse in a
Haunted House**



**#4 I'm Too Fond
of My Fur!**



**#5 Four Mice
Deep in the Jungle**



**#6 Paws Off,
Cheddarface!**



**#7 Red Pizzas for
a Blue Count**



**#8 Attack of the
Bandit Cats**



**#9 A Fabumouse
Vacation for
Geronimo**



**#10 All Because of
a Cup of Coffee**



#11 It's Halloween, You 'Fraidy Mouse!



#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!



#13 The Phantom of the Subway



#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire



#15 The Mona Mouse Code



#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper



#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!



#18 Shipwreck on the Pirate Islands



#19 My Name Is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton



#20 Surf's Up, Geronimo!



#21 The Wild, Wild West



#22 The Secret of Cacklefur Castle



A Christmas Tale



#23 Valentine's Day Disaster



#24 Field Trip to Niagara Falls



#25 The Search for Sunken Treasure



#26 The Mummy with No Name



#27 The Christmas Toy Factory



#28 Wedding Crasher



#29 Down and Out Down Under

**Be sure to check
out these exciting
Thea Sisters
adventures:**



**THEA STILTON
AND THE
DRAGON'S CODE**



**THEA STILTON
AND THE
MOUNTAIN OF FIRE**



**THEA STILTON
AND THE GHOST OF
THE SHIPWRECK**



**THEA STILTON
AND THE
SECRET CITY**



**THEA STILTON
AND THE MYSTERY
IN PARIS**



**THEA STILTON
AND THE CHERRY
BLOSSOM ADVENTURE**



**THEA STILTON
AND THE
STAR CASTAWAYS**



**THEA STILTON:
BIG TROUBLE
IN THE BIG APPLE**



#30 The Mouse Island Marathon



#31 The Mysterious Cheese Thief



Christmas Catastrophe



#32 Valley of the Giant Skeletons



#33 Geronimo and the Gold Medal Mystery



#34 Geronimo Stilton, Secret Agent



#35 A Very Merry Christmas



#36 Geronimo's Valentine



#37 The Race Across America



#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure



#39 Singing Sensation



#40 The Karate Mouse



#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro



#42 The Peculiar Pumpkin Thief



#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!



#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery



#45 Save the White Whale!



#46 The Haunted Castle



#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!



Meet

CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

I, *Geronimo Stilton*, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as **spooky** as my friend **CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR**! She is an enchanting and **MYSTERIOUS** mouse with a pet bat named **Bitewing**.

YIKES! I'm a real 'fraidy mouse, but even I think **CREEPELLA** and her family are **AWFULLY** fascinating. I can't wait for you to read all about **CREEPELLA** in these **fa-mouse-ly funny** and **spectacularly spooky** tales!



#1 THE THIRTEEN GHOSTS



#2 MEET ME IN HORRORWOOD

Don't
miss these
very special
editions!



THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY



THE QUEST FOR
PARADISE:
THE RETURN TO THE
KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE AMAZING
VOYAGE:
THE THIRD ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY

Dear mouse friends,
Welcome to the world of



Geronimo Stilton



THE RODENT'S GAZETTE
EDITORIAL STAFF





Geronimo Stilton

A learned and brainy mouse; editor of *The Rodent's Gazette*



Thea Stilton

Geronimo's sister and special correspondent at *The Rodent's Gazette*



Trap Stilton

An awful joker; Geronimo's cousin and owner of the store Cheap Junk for Less



Benjamin Stilton

A sweet and loving nine-year-old mouse; Geronimo's favorite nephew

Geronimo Stilton

MIGHTY MOUNT KILIMANJARO



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New York	Toronto	London	Auckland
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CHEDDAR CHEWS OR MOZZARELLA MUFFINS?

It was a chilly October evening. A tail-rattling *wind was roaring* through the streets of New Mouse City. I *shivered* and buttoned my jacket up to my snout. Then I locked the door to my office and started home at a *brisk* scamper.

Oh, excuse me, I almost forgot to introduce myself. My name is Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton*. I run *The Rodent's Gazette*, the



most *famous* newspaper on Mouse Island.

I couldn't wait to be home at 8 Mouseford Lane. **FROSTY** cheese pops, it was cold outside!

As soon as I opened the door, I sighed with relief. It was so cozy and warm inside my mouse hole!



I hurried into the bathroom and ran a hot bath. Ahh, there's nothing *better* than a good soak on a cold autumn evening!

After my bath, I put on my favorite flannel pajamas and slippers. Rubbing my paws in satisfaction, I opened the fridge.



Yum, yum, yum! There was so much to choose from! Should I have cheddar chews or mozzarella muffins?



Monterey Jack pie or Swiss fondue? Three-cheese pizza or baked Parmesan cheesecake? **They were all so delicious**, it was difficult to pick just one!

Since I was unable to make up my mind, I decided to treat myself. I grabbed the **largest** plate I could find and filled it with a selection of every **fasty** tidbit inside the fridge. Then I made a cup of hot cheddar and headed to the living room to light the fire.

A huge jigsaw **puzzle** was sprawled on the dining table. It was a map of New Mouse



City, and it was **tricky** with a capital **T**!

I had been working on the **puzzle** for months, and I was just a few pieces away from completing it. I was **savoring** these last moments.

I might frame it and hang it up, I thought. It's not every day a mouse gets to finish a jigsaw as challenging as this one!

I set down my cup of cheese and looked at the remaining pieces. In went one, then another, then another. Whiskers tingling, I inserted the very **L A S T** piece.





MY JIGSAW PUZZLE!

At that very moment, the table started to **tremble**. I looked around in panic. Was it an earthquake? No, the rest of the room was motionless. I tried to keep the table still, but it was no good. It gave a sudden **jerk**, and the puzzle exploded into a thousand pieces.

“NOOOOOOOOOO!” I cried, tearing at my fur. Months of work destroyed in seconds!

Then I heard a cry: “**Ger-on-i-mooooooooo!**”

My snout turned whiter than a slice of mozzarella. I had bigger problems than my ruined puzzle.



I recognized that squeak instantly. It belonged to the world's most adventurous mouse: **BRUCE HYENA!**



YOU'RE TOTALLY OUT OF SHAPE!

Before I could find a place to hide, my **megamuscular, megafit, megatrained, mega-energetic** friend Bruce leaped on top of the table. He grinned at me.

I groaned inwardly. Bruce is a dear friend of mine and a very caring rodent. But he lives for **adventure** and he loves dragging me along with him. I just don't have the tailbone for the kinds of **excitement** Bruce lives for.

"So, **Champ**, are you ready for our next **challenge**?" Bruce asked.

I shook my snout. "Oh, no. Not this time. First of all, I am **NEVER** ready for one of your crazy challenges, Bruce. And secondly,



you've just **RUINED** my favorite kind of challenge — the jigsaw I've been working on for the last six months!"

Bruce pretended not to hear me. He circled me with a critical look on his snout.

"Hmm, saggy tail . . . **DROOPY** muscles . . . cheese gut . . . you're totally out of shape!"

I tried to hide my plate of **goodies** behind my back. "Well, yes, but . . ."

Bruce reached around and pulled the plate out of my paws. "Ah-hah! Now I know how you stay in shape, **Cheese Puff**! You exercise your paws by opening the fridge door! You train your jawbone with your constant chewing! You keep in shape by **licking** your whiskers!"

He paused to sniff at the cheese.
"Well, where we're going, you can forget all about these tasty morsels!"



I gulped **nervously**. “Where do you want to take me, Bruce?”

Bruce folded his paws across his brawny chest. “A little place with rocks, snow, and ice. A little place that’s 19,340 feet above sea level. A little place called

MOUNT KILIMANJARO, where Cheesy Chews are nothing but a distant memory!”

“**MOUNT KILIMANJARO?**” I cried. “Oh, no. Absolutely not. Bruce, if you think I’m coming to Mount Kilithingummy, the **CHEESE** must have slipped off your **CRACKER!**” I exclaimed. “You have *Geronimo Stilton’s* word on that!”



I'M A BOOKMOUSE, NOT A SPORTSMOUSE!

"This was your sister Thea's **idea**," Bruce said. "She said it would make a **G R E A T** scoop!"

Without another squeak, I rushed to the phone and called my sister.

"Thea, I beg you, pleeeeeeeeeease don't send me to **MOUNT KILIMANJARO**! I'm a **bookmouse**, not a sportsmouse!"

"Now, Geronimo, I don't want to hear any whining," she replied briskly. "You know that sales of the paper double when we publish one of your travelogues!"





She was right. My sister was right about almost everything. It was one of her most **IRRITATING** qualities. “Yes, but —”

“No buts now,” Thea interrupted. “Do you want to **disappoint** your readers?”

She had me there. There was nothing I hated more than disappointing my readers. “No, but —”

Then Thea pawed the phone over to my dear nephew Benjamin. “Uncle Geronimo! I heard you’re going to climb **MOUNT KILIMANJARO**! You’re so **brave**! When I’m older, I want to be just like you! Will you send me a postcard?”

I gave up. The only thing I hated more than disappointing my readers was disappointing my nephew. “Yes, Benjamin. I’ll climb **MOUNT KILIMANJARO** and I’ll bring you back a souvenir!”





NOW, WHERE'S MY THANK-YOU?

A few minutes later, **BRUCE** dragged me out of my mouse hole. We were off to the best sports store in New Mouse City, Rats Authority.

Bruce strode into the store and blew an obnoxiously loud whistle:
Phweeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!



I cowered behind him as he started shouting. "Come on! Look sharp, all of you! Hup-hup-hup! Move those paws! This is an **EMEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEMERGENCY!**"

The manager (who knows me well) and his sales clerks all scurried to the counter.

"What's happening? An emergency? Where?" they shouted.



sleeping bag



hiking boots



sweater



clogs



guide to Kenya
& Tanzania



camera



waterproof
pants



coat



fleece shirt



flashlight



long underwear



wool socks



shirts and T-shirts



canteen



bandanna



headlamp



sweatsuit



ski mask



survival kit



gloves



travel diary and pen



towels



underwear



sunglasses



mirror



sunblock



hat



backpack



first aid kit



toothbrush, comb,
toothpaste, and soap



passport
and vaccination
certificate



Swahili mini-dictionary

Bruce winked at the sales clerk. “Put it all on **Cheesehead**’s tab — I mean, Mr. Stilton’s account. He’s **LOADED**! Bye for now — we’ll see you before our next adventure!”

With that, he marched out of the store, calling back to me, “That’s the way to do it! **take a leaf out of my book, champ**! Now, where’s my thank-you?”

I opened my snout, though not to say thank you. Before I could get a squeak in edgewise, Bruce was yammering away again.

“Now, **Cheese Puff**, there’s one last thing: Is your will up-to-date? Have you chosen a nice coffin? Have you booked a place at the local graveyard? Just in case we never come back. Adventurous journeys like this one can sometimes go **wrong**, you know.”

My whiskers trembled with horror. At that moment, my cell phone **rang**.



LEAVE YOUR BURIAL TO ME, GERONIMO!

It was **BORIS VON CACKLEFUR**, my friend **CREEPELLA'S** father and owner of Fabumouse Funerals. "I understand you're going to climb **MOUNT KILIMANJARO**, Geronimo," he squealed. "Don't worry about anything. If you happen to die, leave your burial arrangements to me. I'll



make sure you get a classy funeral. I've got a gorgeous **yellow** coffin I've been saving especially for you!"

I could feel the blood draining out of my tail. "Oh, well, that's very nice of you, but I'm sure it won't be necessary."

Ouch!



Heeeelp!



Brrrr!



Boris **SNICKERED**. "Hee hee hee, who can tell? **MOUNT KILIMANJARO** is 19,340 feet high — I checked Gouda Maps — and all sorts of things can happen on the way up. You might break your paw, fall into a crevice, freeze to death . . ."

CREPELLA snatched the phone away from her father. Do you know Creepella von Cacklefur? She's a charming rodent with just two

defects. This first is that she insists she is my fiancée, which is completely untrue. And the second is that she is far too **SPOOKY** for me! I'm way too big a 'fraidy mouse to marry a creepy rodent like Creepella.

"Now listen up, my sweet little bat wing," Creepella squeaked. "You've got to come back alive, all right? I've got big plans for our future, you know! There'll be trouble in store for you if you kick the bucket on **MOUNT**



KILIMANJARO. After the engagement, we're getting married! Got it?"

Bruce punched me playfully on the arm. I flinched. "Why, aren't you the sneaky little **cheese puff**? You didn't tell me you were engaged!"

"I'm not engaged," I tried to explain.

"And you certainly didn't tell me you were thinking about getting *married*!" Bruce continued.

"But I'm **NOT** thinking about getting married!" I protested.

"Good morning, Creepella," he yelled into the phone. "Don't worry, I'll make sure your future husband is back for the engagement — sorry, marriage — celebration! He'll be a real **he-mouse** by the time we return, just you wait and see!"

Bruce snapped the phone shut. Then he

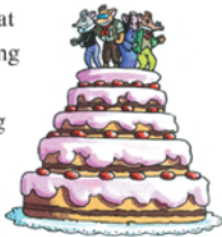
dug an elbow into my ribs, leaving behind a bruise the size of a cheese Danish. “So when’s the honeymoon, **Cheesehead?**”

“**NEVER.** Rodent’s honor.”

Bruce sighed. “I know all about being in love . . . I’m head over paws in love with your sister.” A **wISTFUL** look came over his snout. Suddenly, he brightened up. “Hey, here’s an **ideaaaaa!** Let’s make it a double wedding! You and Creepella, me and Thea!”

My phone beeped. It was a text from Creepella: “**GHOSTIE-WHOSTIE, YOU’LL BE IN BIG TROUBLE IF YOU DON’T COME BACK SAFE AND SOUND. LOVE AND NIBBLES, CREEPELLA.**”

In despair, I wondered what was more dangerous: climbing to the top of **MOUNT KILIMANJARO** or facing Creepella when I returned!!!





A ONCE-IN- A-LIFETIME ADVENTURE!

The next morning, we boarded a plane to Tanzania. When the flight attendant came along with my lunch, **BRUCE** snatched the tray from under my snout.

“Listen up, **Champ**, you’re on a diet as of today. A d-i-e-t, understood? You’ll never get to the top of **KILIMANJARO** unless you start losing that cheese gut!”

Bruce turned to the other passengers. “Hey, everyone! **Cheese Puff** here is going to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. That’s nothing to sneeze at, rodents!”

Everyone was staring at us. I **BLUSHED** from the tip of my snout to the tip of my

AFRICA



Africa is the second largest continent in the world. Its total surface area is more than 11.6 million square miles. It contains the world's longest river — the Nile River, the world's largest desert — the Sahara Desert, and the world's highest free-standing mountain — Mount Kilimanjaro.

Mount Kilimanjaro is actually a dormant volcano. It rises to a height of 19,340 feet. It is located in Tanzania, near the equator. It is the tallest walkable mountain in the world!

To climb Kilimanjaro, you leave the savannah and then walk through a dense rain forest. After that, you reach the moors, followed by an immense expanse of volcanic rock. Finally, you get to the often snowcapped peak with breathtaking views of clouds, cliffs, and plains.

UHURU PEAK
(19,340 feet)

GILLMAN'S POINT
(18,638 feet)

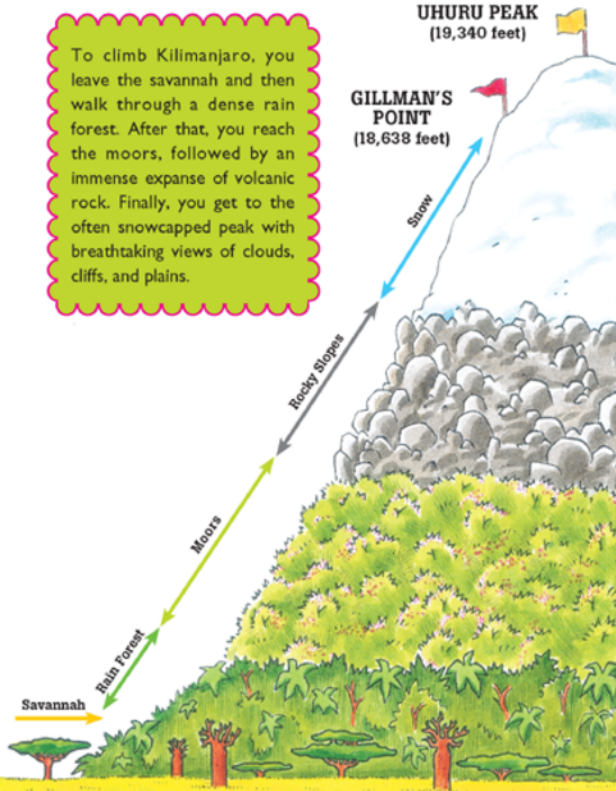
Snow

Rocky Slopes

Moors

Rain Forest

Savannah



tail. But I was used to it. When you hang out with **BRUCE**, you're always at the center of attention.

"Okay, Cheesehead, it's time for my **TRAVEL TIPS**," he rattled on.

I gave him a funny look. Did Bruce think I'd just fallen off the **cheese cart**? Sure, I hated traveling, but I'd been doing it for years!

Bruce shook his snout sadly. "I don't know, if I wasn't here to educate you . . . well, where's my thank-you? Come on, I'll teach you a few words of Swahili. Repeat after me . . ."

"RULE # 1:
FIND OUT ALL YOU CAN ABOUT THE
COUNTRY YOU'RE VISITING!

RULE # 3:
RESPECT LOCAL CUSTOMS
AND HABITS!"

RULE # 2:
LEARN A BIT OF THE
LOCAL LINGO!



MINI-DICTIONARY

Hello: *Hujambo*

Welcome: *Karibu*

Good-bye: *Kwa heri*

How are you?: *Habari gani?*

Fine, thanks: *Mzuri*

Good night: *Lala salama*

Yes: *Ndiyo*

No: *Hapana*

Thank you: *Asante*

Thanks very much: *Asante sana*

No problem: *Hakuna matata*

Slow and steady: *Polepole*

What's your name?: *Unaitwa nani?*



OF SWAHILI

Today: *Leo*

Tomorrow: *Kesho*

Toilet: *Choo*

Food: *Chakula*

Water: *Maji*

Vegetables: *Mboga*

Banana: *Ndizi*

Meat: *Nyama*

Milk: *Maziwa*

Bread: *Mkate*

Chicken: *Kuku*

Rice: *Mchele*

Egg: *Yai*

Swahili is the official language of Tanzania. It is also spoken in Kenya, Zanzibar, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi, Rwanda and Burundi, Somalia, and the Comoro Islands.

Numbers

1	moja	6	sita
2	mbili	7	saba
3	tatu	8	nane
4	nne	9	tisa
5	tano	10	kumi





THE DEADLY RAIN FOREST!

At last, we landed at **KILIMANJARO** International Airport in **Tanzania**. Our guide, **Baraka**, a **DIGNIFIED-LOOKING** rodent, was there to meet us: “*Karibu* (welcome)!”

I was so pleased to be able to say something back in Swahili: “*Hujambo, habari gani* (hello, how are you)?”





YOU CALL THOSE MOSQUITOES?

What could be making that sound? It was as loud as a chain saw.

"*Hakuna matata* (no problem)," **Baraka** reassured me. "**They're only mosquitoes!**"

The mosquitoes swarmed around us. The insect cloud was so **thick**, I could hardly see Bruce and Baraka. The mosquitoes were so huge, they looked like helicopters!

"You call those mosquitoes?"
Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!

"They're biting me all over!"

I started swatting myself on the snout.



But that just made it worse:
My snout started swelling
up like a big red balloon!
The **itching** was unbearable.



As we climbed the mountain,
the **vegetation** changed, thankfully! Soon
we had left the mosquitoes behind.

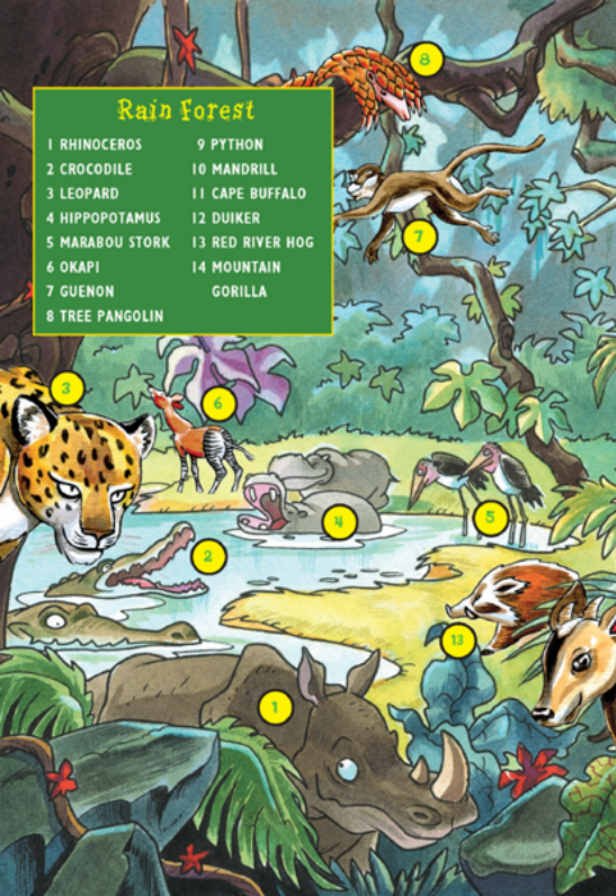
I tried not to think about my swollen snout
as I trudged along the muddy path. It was so
hot! My paws were aching, and I was short
of breath.

BRUCE glanced back at me. “Come on,
Champ, move those paws! The first day is
always the hardest. Once you’ve warmed up
those **PUNY little MUSCLES** of yours, you’ll be fine.”

Baraka pointed toward the forest.
“This forest is home to Cape buffaloes,
rhinoceroses, leopards, and monkeys,” he
told us.

Rain forest

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1 RHINOCEROS | 9 PYTHON |
| 2 CROCODILE | 10 MANDRILL |
| 3 LEOPARD | 11 CAPE BUFFALO |
| 4 HIPPOPOTAMUS | 12 DUIKER |
| 5 MARABOU STORK | 13 RED RIVER HOG |
| 6 OKAPI | 14 MOUNTAIN GORILLA |
| 7 GUENON | |
| 8 TREE PANGOLIN | |





“And snakes, too!” added **BRUCE**. “So keep your eyes peeled, **Cheese Puff!**”

S-s-snakes? I gulped nervously. That was way worse than mosquitoes!

As we scampered along, **SUNLIGHT** filtered through the branches of the huge trees above.

Curdled cream cheese, my paws were really aching! I wondered how many blisters I had. I sat down to take off my boots.

I was so absorbed in my paws, I didn’t even notice something **cool** and **slimy** was slithering over me — until it wrapped itself around my neck!! It squeezed so tight, I turned purple. By the time **BRUCE** popped out



from behind a bush, my eyes were bulging.

“Well, well, well, **Champ**, look at the mess you’ve gotten yourself into now! This snake is made of **RUBBER**, but if it had been real . . . well, let’s just say you’re *lucky* to have me around to teach you. Where’s my thank-you?”

What?! I couldn’t believe it! I was **ANGRIER** than a fat house cat who’s missed feeding time! Bruce just laughed. “Why, I didn’t know you could run so fast, **Cheesehead**! Run run run!”

I chased Bruce here, there, and everywhere until we reached the Mandara Huts at nine thousand feet!





A MAGICAL VEGETABLE SOUP

After our four-hour trek, it was finally time for dinner. I was so hungry, I could've eaten **MOLDY** cheese rinds.

Baraka took us to a wooden hut full of fellow climbers. There we discovered that **MOUNT KILIMANJARO** (or **Kili**, as it is affectionately known) is a very popular destination with

mountaineers. There were rodents from all over the world, and the hut echoed with squeaking in many different languages.



As I chatted with my fellow climbers, I quickly learned that despite our different backgrounds, we all had something in common: our *love* of the mountains and our desire to overcome our personal limitations.

Baraka prepared a *delicious* vegetable soup. “*Chakula* (food)!” he announced.

*This soup smells great, but I could really go for a **three-cheese pizza** right now,* I thought. Bruce slurped the soup down in one big gulp, then rubbed his belly and said, “**YUMMMMMM!**”

I smiled at Baraka. “*Asante* (thank you)!” The hot soup restored my strength. Now I was ready for a nice, long ratnap. I climbed into my sleeping bag and was sound asleep before I could begin counting hamsters.





THE MOORS!

The next morning, **Baraka** woke us at dawn. After a cup of hot cheddar and a bowl of oatmeal, we set off again.

The rain forest gradually gave way to moors covered in heather and giant groundsels. It was beautiful.

Baraka **POINTED** out a tiny chameleon.



Heather

It changed color so quickly!

I stared at it in wonder.
I wished Benjamin was there to see it. He would've been amazed.



Groundsel



Chameleon





POLEPOLE . . . SLOW AND STEADY!

The moors soon gave way to **grass** six feet high that swayed in the wind. The way it moved reminded me of **WAVES** on the ocean.

“As we climb upward, the amount of oxygen in the air diminishes,” **Baraka** explained. “You’ll notice that we’ll get tired quickly. If you want to make it to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro, there’s only one way to do it: **slow and steady**.”

He repeated the idea in Swahili: “*Polepole*



(slow and steady)! We're in no hurry. We'll go slow and steady — very slow and steady!

Polepole...polepole...polepole...

Bruce and I nodded in agreement. I could tell **Baraka** knew what he was doing, and I was glad Bruce had found such a good guide.

As we continued our trek, we were soon overtaken by other groups going **FASTER** than us. They looked down their snouts at us, but Baraka just winked and said: "*Polepole, hakuna matata* (slow and steady, no problem)!"





ARE WE THERE YET?

We went on that way for hours and hours. “Are we there yet?” I moaned in exhaustion. “It feels like we’ve been hiking forever!”

“You’ll know we’re there when you see the lobelias,” explained Baraka. “Lobelias are succulent plants with fleshy, pointed leaves. They grow at ten thousand feet.”

I looked carefully at every plant we encountered, but I couldn’t find a lobelia to save my fur!

“Lobelia?” I asked hopefully as we passed plants here and there. But Baraka just shook his snout.

Hours passed. They felt like DAYS. Baraka was right — I was definitely getting tired quickly.

Finally, **BRUCE** pointed to a **plant** half-hidden by the grass. “**Lobeliaaaaaaaa!**” I looked around and saw several other similar plants. They were all huge, some even taller than I was. Those **bizarre**-looking plants reminded me of a prehistoric forest. I half expected a dinosaur to come stomping by!

It grew **misty** as the day stretched on. But soon I made out a cluster of tiny triangular huts clinging to the mountain like fleas to a cat’s fur. We’d arrived at the Horombo Huts at 12,200 feet.



It was only our second day, but my paws were already lined with blisters. **Crusty Kitty litter. I was in agony!**

I had something to eat, and I wanted to go straight to bed, but first I had to write in my travel **DIARY**. When I got back to New Mouse City, I wanted to be able to describe everything that had happened as accurately as possible. That way, my readers would *feel* like they'd climbed **MOUNT KILIMANJARO** along with me.





DAY
THREE

A WASTELAND OF VOLCANIC ROCK

The next morning, we were up at dawn again. I felt as if I could have slept another twelve hours, but a cup of **HOT** cheddar and a bowl of oatmeal got my paws moving again.

A faster group overtook us. “**See you later, Slowpokes!**” They laughed. We ignored them and continued at our slow and steady pace.

After a while, the landscape became a desolate wasteland of volcanic rock. A pitiless gust of **icy** wind whipped through the boulders. Nothing grew among these bare rocks and stones. There were no plants, no flowers — nothing. The landscape was so **barren**, it was almost as if we had landed on the **MOON**!

The farther we went, the thinner the air became. It was getting more and more difficult to walk.

After a little while, we met up with the **smarty-mice** who had overtaken us earlier. They had come to a halt. Their tongues were hanging out, and they looked like they were about to **paSS out**.

We passed them slowly but surely. **Baraka** shook his snout and murmured, "Mountains are not to be messed with."

Bruce nodded. "Come on, **Cheese Puff**, let's show them how real he-mice get to the top: slow and steady, tired but inspired."

Come on, Cheese Puff, let's show them!





KILI WILL PUT FUR ON YOUR CHEST!



I felt **dreadful**. My snout was **sunburned** because I hadn't used enough sunblock at this high altitude. But what was really getting to me was that my tummy was all **topsy-turvy**!

As for **BRUCE**, he chatted away like there was no tomorrow. Didn't his jawbone ever get tired? I wondered if he exercised that, too!

"Just wait and see, **Champ**, climbing **KILI** will put fur on your chest! After this, you'll be ready to climb anything." I was too exhausted to speak. All I could manage was a long groan: "**AAAAAAAAAAAAAGHHHHH!**"

Bruce laughed. "Come on, Cheesehead! Keep your eyes on the prize. Let's concentrate on making it to the top. **COME ON, COME ON, COME ON!**"

Then he launched into a song he'd made up: "The Kilimanjaro Song."



*We'll get to the top of Kilimanjaro,
it's not really all that far-oh!*



*Who knows if we'll come through alive,
But hey, why shouldn't we survive?*

*our actions louder than words that squeak
We aren't afraid of an ol' mountain peak!
We're mice, we're tough, and we're not gonna stop!
Till we get to that snowcapped mountaintop!*



"Aaaaaaaaagh!" I whimpered. "But I *am* afraid. And I *do* want to survive!"



BRUCE was taken aback. "But you've

already made your will, haven't you? You've chosen your **COFFIN**, and your place in the graveyard has been booked, right? So what are you worried about? Think about the glory of snuffing it on **Kili**'s barren slopes! Think about how famouse you'll be. Imagine the headline: **Read all about it! Geronimo Stilton, editor of THE RODENT'S GAZETTE, lost on Kilimanjaro!** Don't you want to be famouse, Geronimo?"

"Bruce, **I'd rather be famouse for my life than my death!**"

I replied.





MAKE IT MENTAL!

“You’re exhausted, aren’t you?” asked Bruce. “You’ve got a **cramp** in your paws, right? Well, when it feels like you can’t go on, make it **MENTAL!**”

I had no idea what he was squeaking about now. “What do you mean?” I asked.

He flicked me on the snout. “It’s all inside your head! Everything starts upstairs, you know. Feeling tired is a mental problem, you have **BRUCE HYENA’S WORD** on that! Come on, repeat after me: **forward, forward, forward, forward... forward, forward, forward... forward, forward...**”

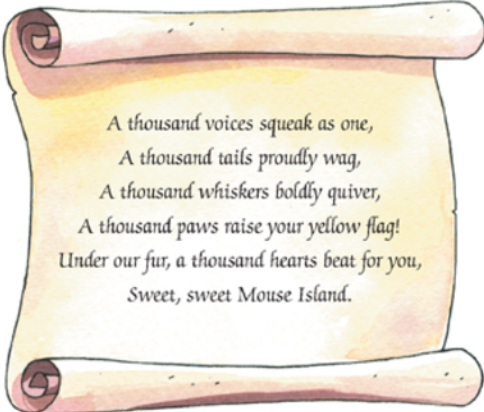
I gave him the **DIRTIEST** look I could muster. Didn’t he ever quit? Well, I guess I already knew the answer to that one.

No, he didn’t.



AN ABSOLUTELY GORGEOUS RODENT

All of a sudden, I heard a *sweet* voice singing
the New Mouse City anthem:



A thousand voices squeak as one,
A thousand tails proudly wag,
A thousand whiskers boldly quiver,
A thousand paws raise your yellow flag!
Under our fur, a thousand hearts beat for you,
Sweet, sweet Mouse Island.

Instinctively, I started singing along. That anthem is a work of inspiration. Just hearing it makes me straighten up my tail with pride. I turned around to see who was singing. What a **lovely** squeak!

When I laid eyes on the singer, my whiskers **quivered** with emotion. It was an absolutely gorgeous rodent with amber fur and eyes as bright as stars in the African sky. She shot me an **irresistible** smile.

My heart started beating faster than a rodent on the run from a hungry cat.

Boom-boom! Boom-boom! Boom-boom! Boom-boom!

I bowed and kissed her paw. She smelled of **Mousey Sighs**, the most delectable perfume known to rodentkind. I was so overcome by her **beauty**, I found myself stuttering: "M-mm-miss, g-g-good d-d-day to you, m-my name is S-s-s-s-s . . ." I was breathless, but

whether this was because of the altitude or the **stunning creature** before me, I couldn't say!

"Hello," she said. "My name is Makeda."

"You have a splendid voice!" I said in my most high-pitched squeak.

She **smiled**. "Thank you. I'm an actress, but I adore outdoor adventures, don't you?"

Instead of agreeing with her, I chose to tell the truth: "Well, I'm more of a bookmouse



than a sportsmouse, actually. I'm here to experience this adventure so I can tell my readers at *The Rodent's Gazette* all about it when —"

Makeda squealed with delight. "*The Rodent's Gazette*? **That's my favorite newspaper!** So you must be the one and only *Geronimo Stilton*!"

If I hadn't already been **SCARLET** with sunburn, I would have turned a similar shade from pride and embarrassment.

"So you're climbing **Kilimanjaro** this evening, too?" Makeda asked. "Perhaps we can climb up together? If you don't mind the company, of course."

I was about to say that I would be delighted to climb with her when **BRUCE** butted in. "Good morning, miss!" he roared in his usual loud squeak. "Do excuse me if I

drag this **cheesehead** away.”

For a moment, I thought I saw a look of disappointment cross Makeda’s snout. **Was it possible that she liked me? Was it possible that I was her type?** Could a scrawny little **bookmouse** like me really win over a **GORGEOUS** supermouse like her?

I was about to protest when **BRUCE** dragged me off by the tail.

“Farewell, Makeda,” I shouted. “I mean, **bye-bye** for now. I hope to see you soon! Best of luck! Let’s get together sometime.”

But it was no use. **MY CONFUSED, DESPERATE WORDS** were carried off by the freezing mountain winds.





MIDNIGHT HORROR STORY!

We'd finally reached the Kibo Huts at 15,430 feet. My tummy was still giving me **a hard time**. I wanted to eat, but the altitude was really making me nauseous — the higher you climb, and the thinner the air, the more likely you are to experience nausea and dehydration.

The huts were built out of stone and corrugated iron. Inside each one, there were bunk beds for the climbers, but there was no running water. And the worst part was, it was **icy cold**!

Desperate to keep warm, I put on all the clothes I had.

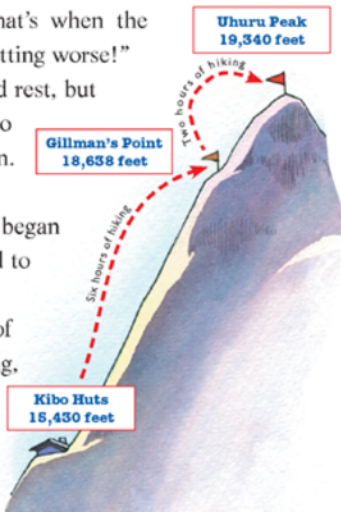


When I was finished, I had on so many layers, I looked like an **overstuffed** turkey.

"Tonight is the night, my friends," said **Baraka**. "We have to leave at midnight. We must reach the summit and start coming back down again before nine o'clock in the morning. That's when the weather starts getting worse!"

I knew I should rest, but I was desperate to see Makeda again. I gave **BRUCE** a lame excuse and began scurrying around to look for her.

After an hour of fruitless searching, **BRUCE** caught



up with me. “Cheesehead, you’re supposed to be resting! Where have you been?” he asked suspiciously.

“Don’t worry, I couldn’t find Makeda! I’ll never see her again . . . **ever**!” I sobbed. “And it’s all your fault!”

Besides being heartsick, I was still feeling sick in another part of my anatomy — my **TUMMY**! I knew it was a symptom of **altitude sickness**.

Oh, how I missed my warm, **cozy** mouse hole in New Mouse City!

After dinner, I tried to relax, but I just couldn’t. Finally, I made my way into the big **STONE** room where the climbers slept. Rickety bunk beds leaned against the wall. Wearily, I climbed into my sleeping bag.



Oh, how I missed the warm comfort of my own bed!

That night was the **worst** I've ever had. The lack of oxygen made me feel like I was suffocating. It was miserable! Whenever I started to doze off, I woke up with a start. It was worse than my worst **NIGHTMARE**, the one where I'm taking the ACTs (Ancient **Cheeses** Test) and can't remember the difference between Camembert and Colby.

Ratty Chops, the mouse sleeping on the bunk below me, kept calling out in his sleep. He sounded even more miserable than I was.

At last, at the stroke of **MIDNIGHT**, our guide arrived. "Time to get up! **We've got to get going!** Move those paws!" (Bruce was starting to rub off on him, I could tell.)

Ratty Chops shook his snout in desperation. "I feel absolutely **awful**. I just can't do it.

But I'll come back next year to try again!"

"Well said, friend," said **BRUCE**. "There's true wisdom in recognizing the moment to say no. Better luck next time!"

"Well, in that case," I piped up hopefully. "I think I'll say no **as well**!"

"Not you, Stilton," Bruce replied. "On your paws, Cheesehead!"

Ratty Chops sighed and put a photo of a little mouse back in his backpack. "I promised my daughter that I would take her photo to the top of **MOUNT KILIMANJARO**."

BRUCE placed his paw on Ratty's shoulder. "*Hakuna matata* (no problem)! We'll do it for you. **IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO FOR A FRIEND!**"





DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

It was pitch-black outside. We joined a **long line** of wheezing climbers who were setting off along the uphill path.

No one squeaked. No one had the strength.

Behind me, **BRUCE** snickered: “**Cheese Puff**, if you start rolling backward, I’ll catch you, okay? Tee-hee!”

I didn’t laugh. I didn’t have the strength.

As we worked our way slowly up the path, the amount of oxygen decreased and our **FATIGUE** increased.

While I was hauling myself along the pebbly slope, which became steeper and steeper, **BRUCE** started telling me **TERRIFYING** mountain legends.

“**DID YOU KNOW THAT** the weather can change suddenly in the mountains? **DID YOU KNOW THAT** if it changes while we’re on the summit, we won’t have enough time to get back down? **DID YOU KNOW THAT** someone caches in their cheese on **Kilimanjaro** every year? But you don’t need to worry about that, Champ: you’ve already written your will, you’ve chosen a **nice** casket, you’ve booked a place at the graveyard — you’ve thought of everything!”

I **shivered**, both from the cold and from Bruce’s stories. My paws were numb. My tail was frozen stiff. I’d be the perfect **ice cube** in a yeti cocktail.



The perfect ice cube ...





FORWARD!

Every tiny gesture drained my **ENERGY**. I felt like I was walking in slow motion, almost as if I were underwater! It occurred to me that I was at the same height as many airplanes — 19,000 feet!

Baraka handed me his water bottle: “*Maji* (water)? *Polepole* (slow and steady)!”

I *swallowed* half the bottle’s contents in one big gulp. But the water was icy, and I realized I had made a serious mistake! Immediately, I felt sick to my stomach and **very nauseous**.

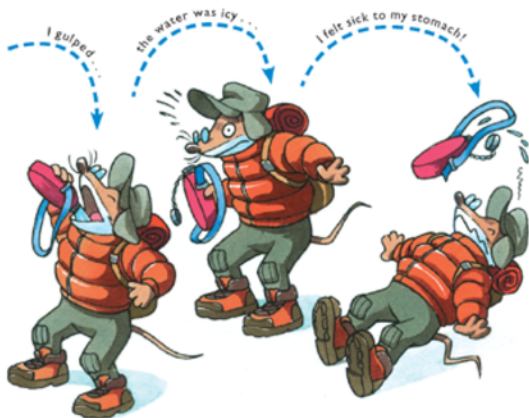
I tumbled to the ground and rolled over and over. I felt sicker than a young seamouse on his first trip on the Ratlantic.

Baraka leaned over and said kindly, “I’m

afraid that's it, Geronimo. You'll have to go back down."

BRUCE nodded. "Let's forget it for now, Geronimo. No long snouts, though — we can always try again next year!"

I was about to agree when suddenly, Benjamin's words **ECHOED** in my ears: "Uncle Geronimo, you're going to climb Mount Kilimanjaro? You're so **BRAVE!**"





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A SPECK IN THE INFINITE UNIVERSE!

“**LOOK, GERONIMO!**” called **BRUCE**. “Look at this incredible view!”

Bruce opened his arms wide and yelled: “This is the life! I feel like a speck in the infinite universe! *Thanks for existing, world!*”



I finally looked up from the path and fell silent. **BRUCE** was right. Dawn on **Kilimanjaro** was a **whisker-tingling sight**. Along the horizon, the deep indigo sky was streaked with pink, violet, and orange. It was fabumouse!

BRUCE sighed. "How I wish Thea was here with me now. *You know, I'm snout over paws in love with her.*"

A whisker-tingling sight!





I thought how nice it would be to have Benjamin here with me now. Perhaps he would climb **MOUNT KILIMANJARO** when he grew up.



Then my thoughts turned to **Makeda** and those *bewitching* eyes of hers.

Even a 'fraidy mouse like me could find the courage for adventure with her by my side! Would I ever see her again?



Bruce hit me over the snout with a snowshoe.



"Chop-chop, Cheese Puff.

Forward, forward, forward, forward, forward, forward, forward, forward!"



THE SUMMIT AT LAST!

I was having a really hard time with the lack of oxygen. **BRUCE** kept repeating: “Forward, forward, forward, forward . . .”

His words boomed through my brain like cat claws on a hardwood floor.

Baraka pointed to the end of the path. “**Uhuru Peak!** The summit of **MOUNT KILIMANJARO!**”

We’d reached the summit!

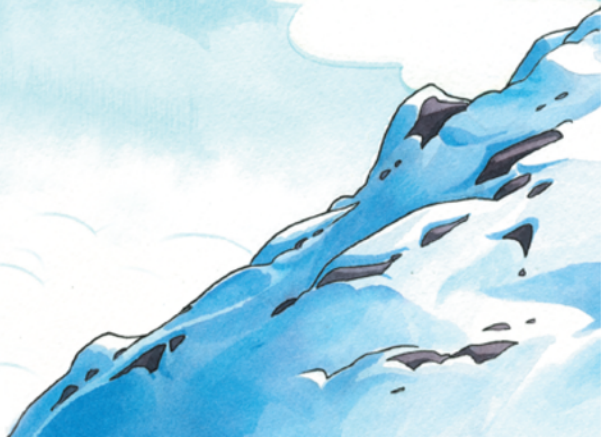
we’d climbed MOUNT KILIMANJARO!

BRUCE knelt down and kissed the snow. Then he declared, “**Mount Kilimanjaro, thanks for existing!**”

I climbed the rest of the way to the peak very slowly. Then I shook paws with **Baraka**



Mount Kilimanjaro, thanks for existing!



and Bruce. "Thanks, my friends. I could never have made it without you!"

Baraka smiled at me. Using the timer on our camera, we took a photo of ourselves **WAVING** a Mouse Island flag and holding the photo Ratty Chops had given us.

Baraka was starting to get anxious. "All right, friends, *we've got to get back down!*"

I was ecstatically happy. Throwing my paws open wide, I gazed far into the distance and thanked my lucky stars I was alive at that moment.

Baraka shook me by the paw and said urgently, "*We have to get back down!*"

RIGHT NOW!" He pointed to the sky.

Black clouds were looming menacingly on the horizon.





WE HAVE TO GET BACK DOWN!

Baraka's anxiety was contagious. My whiskers were **quivering** with fear as we hurried back down the path. I looked up at the sky. A **big, dark cloud** was getting closer and closer.



That wasn't a good sign.

BRUCE's TERRIFYING stories flashed through my mind. We were about to be trapped in a storm! Our fur was at risk! **Maybe** I should've taken Bruce's advice and booked a place in the **graveyard!**

Instead of his usual *polepole*, Baraka was urging us to get a move on: "***We have to keep moving!***"

As he squeaked, the **sun** disappeared

behind a mass of **inky** black clouds. Faster than you could say “frosty cheese pops with crumbs on top,” the weather had changed. The icy wind that swept across the mountain was so **wicked**, it almost blew me over!

Going down was easier than going up. But Baraka pointed out that it could be too easy. We didn’t want to trip and **slide down**. “Watch your step!” he reminded us.

I was trying to be careful, I really was. But suddenly, I slipped on a **rocky** crag covered in ice.

My paws flailed in the air as I desperately tried to find something to hold on to.

It was too late. I fell down, down, down.

“**Bruce, help!**” I yelled. He tried to grab me by the tail, but then he slipped, too!

“Don’t **worry**, Champ!” he shouted. “Sooner or later, we’ve got to **hit bottom!**”

“That’s what I’m afraid of!” I shouted back. We could tumble down 19,340 feet — from the top of **Mount Kilimanjaro** to the **BOTTOM**!

This was going to be one heck of a nosedive, I could feel it in my **fur**!

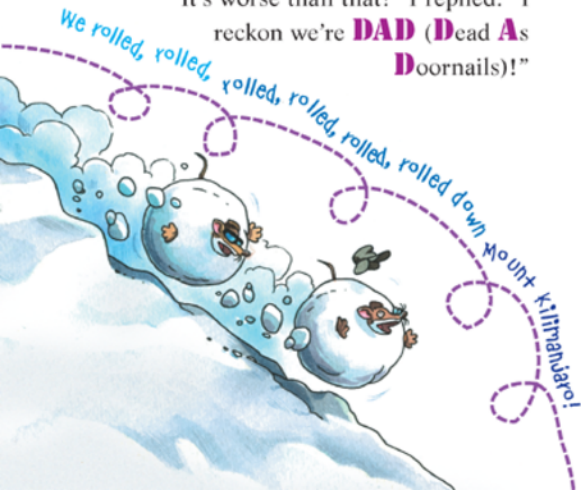




ROLLING, ROLLING, ROLLING!

As we plunged downward, **BRUCE** shouted:
“We’re **P I B T** (**P**robably **I**n **B**ig
Trouble)!”

“It’s worse than that!” I replied. “I
reckon we’re **DAD** (**D**ead **A**s
Doornails)!”



After one last **fur-raising** leap through the air, we ended up snout-down in a mound of volcanic dust. We had stopped! **Miraculously**, we had stopped!

I was covered in snow and dust from the tip of my tail to the ends of my whiskers.

“**BRUCE**, are you alive?” I spluttered. I looked around me. Nothing. No sign of Bruce. Until . . . wait, was that his tail sticking up behind a **ROCK**?

Digging around **FRANTICALLY**, I finally managed to pull **BRUCE** up. But he wouldn’t open his eyes and he didn’t respond to my attempts to revive him.

“**Bruce! Bruuuuuuuuuuuuuce!**” I cried desperately. How could I lose my best friend this way? What would I do without him? He was the expert, not me!

I thought about it for a moment. Then I

knew what I had to do. I had to get Bruce back to the hut before it was too late!

I heaved him across my shoulders. Then slowly and carefully, I continued my **deScent**.

It was hard work. Every half hour, I stopped to get my breath and check on **BRUCE**. He still seemed lifeless.

I tried going faster, huffing and puffing under Bruce's weight. Those muscles of his sure were **HEAVY**!

After about three hours, I **slid** on some rocks and fell over. For a moment, I thought

I saw **BRUCE** open his eyes. But no, it must've been a **trick** of the light.

He was still out.



Two hours later, I was so tired, I could hardly feel my paws. But I kept on. I had to. “**What will I do without Bruce?**”

I muttered desperately.

I thought I heard someone squeak, “Don’t give up! Never give up!”

I looked around in **CONFUSION**. But I was all alone. The only rodent nearby was Bruce, and he was still unconscious.

By the time I reached the hut, I was ready to drop. With my last ounce of **energy**, I shouted: “Hello there! Heeeeeeeelp! I’ve got a mouse in urgent need of medical attention!”



A hearty voice answered. "Medical attention? Squeak for yourself, Champ! I feel **FINE!**" With that, **BRUCE** leaped off my back and grinned at me.

I was aghast. "B-b-but . . . you're **alive!** You're all right!" I stammered.

"Of course I am! I'm always fine!" Bruce boasted. "I'm as **TOUGH** as an old sewer rat, you know that! Just much **BETTER-LOOKING**, of course," he added as an afterthought.

"Why did you pretend to be unconscious?" I demanded.

"First, it's **IMPORTANT** for you to get those puny muscles of yours in shape," he responded. "Secondly, it's important for you to learn to take care of yourself and others without my **HELP**. And finally, it's important for you to learn not to give up!"

I remembered that I thought I'd seen him



open his eyes and murmur, “Don’t give up!”

“You had me **carry** you on my back for hours and hours!” I screeched indignantly.

Bruce smiled and nodded. “**I did it for your own good,**” he said **MADDENINGLY**. “**Now, where’s my thank-you?**”

That was the straw that **broke** this rodent’s back. I chased him around and around a hut.



YOU'RE ALIVE!

Before I could catch up with that **slimy** excuse for a mouse, **Baraka** ran up to us with open paws. "Incredible! You're alive!"

"Of course we are," said Bruce smugly.

"There's no 'of course' about it," I protested. "I was sure we were going to become **fur coats!**"

My cell phone started **ringing**. It was **BORIS VON CACKLEFUR**.



“Geronimo, you’re still alive?” he cried. “I’ve prepared your **COFFIN** . . . your place in the graveyard is all ready . . . if you could only see the beautiful chrysanthemums I’ve prepared for your **GRAVESTONE** . . .”

“Erm, thank you, Boris, that’s very kind of you,” I said with a **shiver**. “But I don’t think I’ll be needing —”

Suddenly, I heard a female squeak come from the other end of the phone. “Geronimo! I’m waiting for you, my little **ghoulie-whoulie**! I can’t wait to make you my very own **hubby-wubby**!”

BRUCE snatched the phone from my paw. “Miss Creepella, is that you?” he roared. “Don’t worry, I’ll bring your beloved home to you safe and sound. Wait until you see what great shape he’s in. In fact, I don’t think I can call him **Cheese Puff** anymore! But if

he wants the award for **T A M** (**T**ruly **A**thletic **M**ouse), I'm afraid he's got to scale another mountain: **Everest!** What do you say?"

Bruce paused. I could hear Creepella **CHATTERING** away on the other end. "Yes, that's just as I thought . . . Indeed, what mouse doesn't like saying that although her fiancé may look a bit of a chump, he has climbed Everest! . . . Okay, it's a deal, so now I'll take him to Everest with me, but you have to promise that I'll be the best mouse at your wedding. I'd appreciate it if you name your firstborn after me, **BRUCE HYENA** . . . Whaaaaat? You'd already thought of that? You are truly a kindhearted rodent, worthy of my best buddy here! Okay then, **it's a deal.**"

He lowered his squeak. "Look, I know Stilton is a bit of an **ODD** rat, but if he gets

cold paws, I'll drag him to the altar by his whiskers, you have my word on that!"

With that, he snapped the phone shut.
"Now don't let me down, **Cheese Puff!**
I'm a rodent of my word and I don't need any
STINKY cheese stains on my honor!"

I tried imagining my future with a wife like Creepella, a father-in-law like Boris, and a son (or daughter?) named Bruce Hyena. What a **NIGHTMARE!**





I KNEW YOU'D MAKE IT!

Baraka brought us certificates declaring that we'd reached the summit of **MOUNT KILIMANJARO**. He shook our paws proudly as he presented them to us.

We had a huge meal, then it was time to fly back to New Mouse City. I'd never been so **happy** to head home.

Benjamin greeted our plane. "Uncle Geronimo!" he cried, hugging me tightly. "I knew you'd make it to the top of **MOUNT KILIMANJARO**!"

"Benjamin!" I said happily. "This certificate is for you. I hope you'll experience an **adventure** like this yourself one day!"





CERTIFICATE OF
ACHIEVEMENT

We hereby certify that the rodent

Geronimo Stilton

has climbed to the
top of Kilimanjaro.





YES, WE'RE FABUMOUSE!

When my travelogue was published in *The Rodent's Gazette*, it was **ENORMOUSLY** successful! The phones were **ringing** off the hook, and we received so many e-mails we almost **crashed** our server!

My assistant piled thousands of letters on top of my desk. "Geronimo, you have so many admirers, and they all want to meet you and **BRUCE!**" she told me.

Our fans were so energetic, the raterazzi kept trying to **break down** the doors!

All the attention made me **nervous**. Barricaded inside my office, I **peeped** out of the window. Instantly, I heard a cry: "**THERE HE IS!** It's him! It's Stilton, *Geronimo Stilton!*"

Bruce **LOOKED** out of the window, too, but he was a lot less timid than me. He blew **kisses** to his admirers. "Thank you, thank you! Yes, I know we're **fabumouse**, thank you!"

The shout that rose up from the crowd rocked the entire office.

"Bruuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuce!"

I went **pale** as the purest mozzarella. "The door is locked tight, right?" I asked my editor in chief, Creamy O'Cheddar.

She double-checked. "Relax, Mr. Stilton, everything is under control."



YES, WE'RE FABUMOUSE!





I'M A VERY SHY MOUSE . . .

I sat back down at my desk. The phone rang.

"Hello? Geronimo? It's me, CREEPELLA!"

"Oh, hi, Creepella," I squeaked nervously.

"Sorry, I can't talk, I'm very busy."

"Nonsense, my little creepy-crawly.

Now listen. As you know, I'm the most famous film director on New Mouse Island, and I'm not willing to see an opportunity like this go to waste. I want to direct a movie about you and Bruce on MOUNT KILIMANJARO."

"Oh, a movie?" I replied hesitantly. "Well, I'll have to think about it. I'm a very shy mouse, you know."



Bruce snatched the phone right out of my paw. "**OF COURSE WE'LL DO IT!**" he shouted.

I sighed. What choice did I have? Bruce would find a way to trick me into it whether I agreed or not. "Oh, all right."

I had to admit, the idea of being in a movie **was exciting!**

The movie was called ***Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro.***

Bruce wanted to go back to the summit to shoot. "Listen, **Cheese Puff**, wouldn't it be amazing to go through it all again? All that adventure, all those dangers . . ." He got a wistful look in his eyes.

Moldy mozzarella! I dashed off to the closet and locked myself in.

"No, no, no," I yelled. "You've got to be kidding! There's **NO WAY** I'm going

back to **MOUNT KILIMANJARO!** I refuse to be mousenapped and dragged up that crazy mountain again!"

BRUCE knocked on the closet door. "Geronimo, I'm disappointed in you. I thought you'd changed, that you'd learned not to give up." He sighed deeply. I refused to come out until Benjamin assured me we wouldn't be returning to **MOUNT KILIMANJARO.**

CREPELLA explained to **BRUCE** that she was going to re-create the



mountain-climbing scenes on a movie set.

Bruce was bitterly **disappointed**.
“Oh, a movie set. So, no cold? No snow? No precipices? No dizzy spells? No discomfort? No risks? No death-defying dangers? No bruises, broken bones, headaches, nausea, or blisters? **What a pity.**”

I was so relieved. What could possibly happen to me in a studio?

I decided to prepare myself for the role of a lifetime. After all, how many **rodents** get to play themselves in a **MAJOR MOTION PICTURE**?



I took squeak lessons (to learn how to project my voice) and acting lessons (to learn how to **express** myself effectively). Let me tell you, actors make it look easy, but it's really **HARD**!





Yet I didn't give up. That was something I'd learned during my adventure on **KILIMANJARO:**
NEVER GIVE UP!

At last, the first day of filming arrived. **I was really nervous!**

I put on my costume.

The **makeup** artist combed my fur, then powdered my snout.

CREEPELLA shouted:
“**LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!**”

The cameramice began filming **BRUCE** and me.

The editors chose the most important scenes.

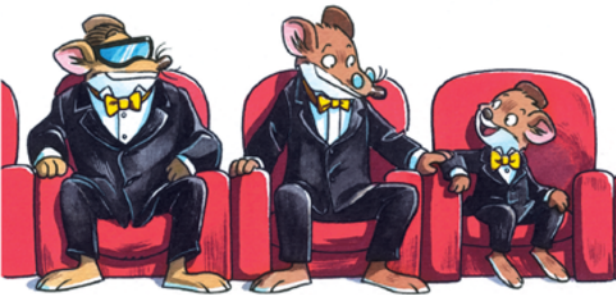
*And six months later,
the movie was ready!*



AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT

It was opening night! **BRUCE**, Benjamin, and I were invited to the premiere at New Mouse City's fanciest theater. We dressed in tuxedos. It was the **first** time I'd ever seen Bruce wearing anything other than athletic gear. We all looked very **HANDSOME**.

The **lights** went out and the screen **CAME 'TO LIFE**.



From the opening sequence to the finale, the film re-created one of the most exciting **adventures** of my life. There was action, adventure, drama, suspense, and even humor. It was an **AMAZING** film!

When the lights came on again, applause thundered through the theater.

As we exited, rodents swarmed around us. Bruce and I signed hundreds of autographs.

Just before midnight, my good friend **Hercule Poirat** turned up. I usually try to keep him and **BRUCE** apart. They are both in **love** with my sister and they are very jealous of each other!

I started to sweat like a slice of Swiss that's been left in the sun too long. **THINGS WERE HEATING UP!**



WHO ARE YOU GOING OUT WITH TONIGHT?

The clock in the main square of
New Mouse City struck midnight.
Dong! Dong! Dong! Dong! Dong!
Dong! Dong! Dong! Dong! Dong!
Dong! Dong!



On the twelfth stroke, **BRUCE** looked down
his snout at Hercule Poirat and said, “Hey,
Cheesehead. Yeah, I’m **squeaking** to you!
Your name is **Hercule**, isn’t it?”

Hercule Poirat gave him a **HAUGHTY** look.
“That’s correct. And who might you be?”

“**BRUCE!**”

“Bruce who?”

“Just **BRUCE** to you!”

I tried to calm them both down. “Um, yes, well, I’m really glad my two best **FRIENDS** have at last had the chance to meet.”

But they weren’t listening. They were **glaring** at each other.

BRUCE put on his toughest **he-mouse** look.

Hercule responded with his **brainiest**, most superior smirk.

At that moment, Thea strolled in.

“*Thea*,” **BRUCE** said, sighing. His whiskers were trembling with emotion and devotion.



"Thea,"
whispered
Hercule.



A silly look came over his snout.

My sister gave them each a **sassy** smile.

I rolled my eyes and sighed in relief. I know my sister like the back of my paw.

"Thea, who are you going out with tonight?"
cried Bruce and Hercule together.

Thea twirled her whiskers flirtatiously.
"Well, I already have a date with **him**!"

A conceited-looking rodent stood behind my sister. He was handsome, all right, but he had an **arrogant** air about him that really rubbed my fur the wrong way.

He **kissed** Thea on the back of the paw and said smoothly, "Well, my darling, let us make haste. Our automobile awaits!"

With that, the two of them set off in the

direction of a **LUXURY YELLOW SPORTSCAR** with synthetic cat-fur seats.

Thea waved bye-bye, and the **raterazzi** went wild. "That's Igor Snob, the biggest name in **MOUSEYWOOD**

at the moment. He's just been awarded a **Ratscar!**"

whispered the gossip columnist next to us.

"Well, I'll be a tomcat's uncle!" I

squeaked

worriedly. I

hoped Thea wasn't taking the whole

thing **SERIOUSLY**. I

certainly didn't fancy

having Igor for a

brother-in-law!



BRUCE and **Hercule** looked at each other. I thought they were going to start **ARGUING** again. Instead, they threw their paws around each other and began **SODDING**. “We’ve lost her forever!” cried Bruce.

I had an idea. “I know, let’s go to my favorite French restaurant in town, **Le squeakery**. We can drown our sorrows in their special cheddar fondue!”

Hercule brightened up at once. “Fondue? Elementary, my dear Stilton! What a fabumouse idea!”

“**Fondue?**” Bruce roared. “That’ll be hard on the waistline but easy on the heart, **cheese puff!**”



THERE'S NOTHING LIKE CHEESE . . .

At **Le squeakery**, we got a cozy little table in the back. “**Now, are you two going to make peace?**” I demanded.

Bruce shook his snout. “Not peace, no . . .” he began.

“But we can manage a truce!” Hercule finished.

They shook paws, then stuck their snouts in the **special** cheeses menu, squeaking away like there was no tomorrow. I grinned



behind my whiskers. There's nothing like **CHEESE** to make peace among mice.

We were greedily guzzling down a big pot of fondue when I heard a sweet voice call: "Geronimo! I saw your film! **CONGRATULATIONS!**"

It was Makeda!

I nearly choked on the piece of bread I had just dunked into the boiling fondue. "**AAAAAAAAAAAAAGGGGGGGHHHHHH!**"

Tears welled up in my eyes. (Not tears of emotion, tears of pain — that fondue was really **hot!**) But I wasn't about to lose another opportunity with Makeda.

Gathering up my courage, I scampered over to her table. "**Makeda**, you have no idea how much I've been thinking about you." I bowed and **kissed** her soft paw.





AH, LOVE!

Makeda smiled **sweetly**. "I've been thinking about you too, Geronimo."

"*R-r-really?*" I stammered. "H-h-have you really?"

She nodded. "Yes. I have a proposal for you, Geronimo."

"Yeeeeeees! Anything for you! Go ahead, what do you propose?"

Makeda gave me an earnest look. "*Would you like to climb Everest with me?*"



Me? Climb **EVEREST**? Again? As you know, I've been to Everest before, but I didn't make it to the top. In fact, I was kidnapped by a **YETI**. A real, live **YETI**!!

I looked Makeda in the eyes. A wave of uncontrollable emotion swept over me. I'd do anything for her.

Ah, *love*! That's how it always goes. A mouse will do anything for the object of his affection.

Do you want to know what happened in the end?

Well, I really did climb **EVEREST**! And this time, I made it all the way to the top. That's right. **Holey cheese**, I reached the top of the world's highest mountain!

But, dear readers, that's a story for another day — and another **adventure**!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Born in New Mouse City, Mouse Island, **GERONIMO STILTON** is Rattus Emeritus of Mousomorphic Literature and of Neo-Ratonic Comparative Philosophy. For the past twenty years, he has been running *The Rodent's Gazette*, New Mouse City's most widely read daily newspaper.

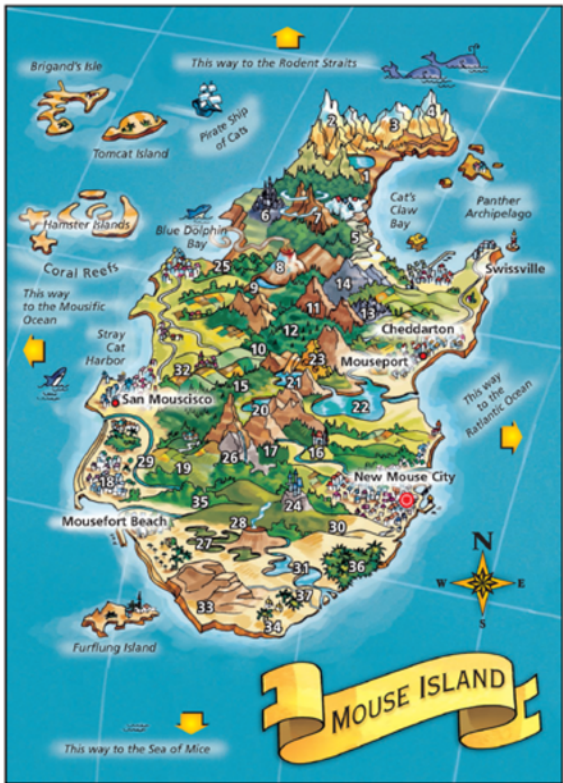
Stilton was awarded the Ratitzer Prize for his scoops on *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid* and *The Search for Sunken Treasure*. He has also received the Andersen 2000 Prize for Personality of the Year. One of his bestsellers won the 2002 eBook Award for world's best ratlings' electronic book. His works have been published all over the globe.

In his spare time, Mr. Stilton collects antique cheese rinds and plays golf. But what he most enjoys is telling stories to his nephew Benjamin.



Map of New Mouse City

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Industrial Zone | 25. <i>The Rodent's Gazette</i> |
| 2. Cheese Factories | 26. Trap's House |
| 3. Angorat International Airport | 27. Fashion District |
| 4. WRAT Radio and Television Station | 28. The Mouse House Restaurant |
| 5. Cheese Market | 29. Environmental Protection Center |
| 6. Fish Market | 30. Harbor Office |
| 7. Town Hall | 31. Mousidon Square Garden |
| 8. Snotnose Castle | 32. Golf Course |
| 9. The Seven Hills of Mouse Island | 33. Swimming Pool |
| 10. Mouse Central Station | 34. Blushing Meadow Tennis Courts |
| 11. Trade Center | 35. Curlyfur Island Amusement Park |
| 12. Movie Theater | 36. Geronimo's House |
| 13. Gym | 37. Historic District |
| 14. Catnegie Hall | 38. Public Library |
| 15. Singing Stone Plaza | 39. Shipyard |
| 16. The Gouda Theater | 40. Thea's House |
| 17. Grand Hotel | 41. New Mouse Harbor |
| 18. Mouse General Hospital | 42. Luna Lighthouse |
| 19. Botanical Gardens | 43. The Statue of Liberty |
| 20. Cheap Junk for Less (Trap's store) | 44. Hercule Poirat's Office |
| 21. Parking Lot | 45. Petunia Pretty Paws's House |
| 22. Mouseum of Modern Art | 46. Grandfather William's House |
| 23. University and Library | |
| 24. <i>The Daily Rat</i> | |



Map of Mouse Island

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Big Ice Lake | 21. Lake Lakelake |
| 2. Frozen Fur Peak | 22. Lake Lakelakelake |
| 3. Slipperyslopes Glacier | 23. Cheddar Crag |
| 4. Coldcreeps Peak | 24. Cannycat Castle |
| 5. Ratzikistan | 25. Valley of the Giant Sequoia |
| 6. Transratania | 26. Cheddar Springs |
| 7. Mount Vamp | 27. Sulfurous Swamp |
| 8. Roastedrat Volcano | 28. Old Reliable Geyser |
| 9. Brimstone Lake | 29. Vole Vale |
| 10. Poopedcat Pass | 30. Ravingrat Ravine |
| 11. Stinko Peak | 31. Gnat Marshes |
| 12. Dark Forest | 32. Munster Highlands |
| 13. Vain Vampires Valley | 33. Mousehara Desert |
| 14. Goose Bumps Gorge | 34. Oasis of the Sweaty Camel |
| 15. The Shadow Line Pass | 35. Cabbagehead Hill |
| 16. Penny Pincher Castle | 36. Rattytrap Jungle |
| 17. Nature Reserve Park | 37. Rio Mosquito |
| 18. Las Ratayas Marinas | |
| 19. Fossil Forest | |
| 20. Lake Lake | |



Dear mouse friends,
Thanks for reading, and farewell
till the next book.
It'll be another whisker-licking-good
adventure, and that's a promise!

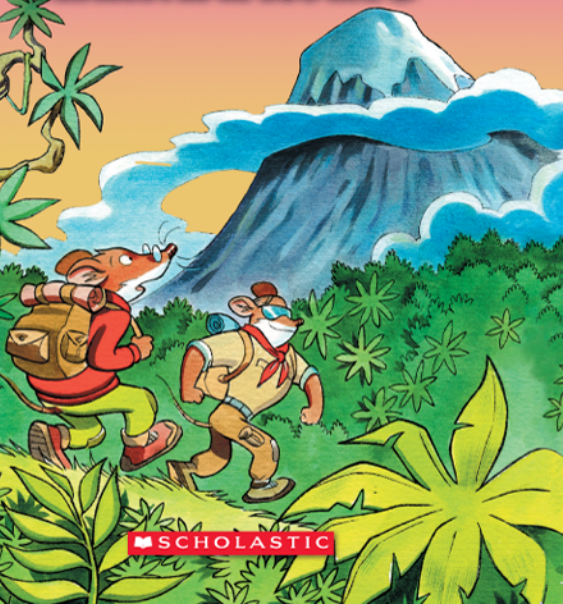


Geronimo Stilton



Geronimo Stilton

MIGHTY MOUNT KILIMANJARO



 SCHOLASTIC